

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising, not necessarily in the order shown:
 - (A) providing at least one gaming device capable of presenting a game to a player and recording the value of a cashless device;
 - (B) providing a cashless device;
 - (C) permitting a player to play the gaming device;
 - (D) recording the value of the cashless device;
 - (E) redeeming at least a portion of the value of the cashless device; and
 - (F) awarding the player an additional prize when the value redeemed exceeds a predetermined qualifying amount.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the cashless device comprises a voucher.
- 15 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the cashless device comprises a ticket.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the cashless device comprises a card.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising transferring the value of the cashless device from the gaming device to a redemption location.
- 20 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the additional prize comprises a cash prize.

7. The method of claim 6 further comprising determining the value of the cash award using a random number generator.

5 8. The method of claim 6 wherein the cash prize comprises a percentage of the redeemed value.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising determining the percentage of the redeemed value using a random number generator.

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10. The method of claim 8 wherein the percentage is determined by a gaming operator.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the additional prize comprises a chance at winning a prize having a value.

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12. The method of claim 11 wherein the prize having a value comprises cash.

13. The method of claim 11 wherein the prize having a value comprises game play credits.

20 14. The method of claim 11 wherein the prize having a value comprises merchandise.

15. The method of claim 11 wherein the prize having a value comprises a service.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the additional award comprises a non-cash prize.
17. The method of claim 16 wherein the non-cash prize comprises a good.
- 5 18. The method of claim 16 wherein the non-cash prize comprises a service.
19. The method of claim 1 wherein the additional prize comprises play on a game of chance.
20. The method of claim 19 wherein the game of chance is played on a slot machine.

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21. The method of claim 19 wherein the game of chance is activated when the cashless device is redeemed.

22. A method for providing a player an incentive to redeem winnings using a cashless device, comprising, but not necessarily in the order shown:

- (A) providing a wagering game to a player;
- 5 (B) allowing the player to transfer value to the wagering game;
- (C) recording the value transferred by the player to the wagering game;
- (D) presenting a game to the player;
- (E) allowing the player to place a wager;
- (F) playing the game;
- 10 (G) determining whether the result of the game is a winning event or a losing event;
- (H) updating the recorded value by adding or subtracting from the recorded value depending on whether the result of the game was a winning or losing event;
- (I) allowing the player to cash-out at least a portion of the updated recorded value;
- 15 and
- (J) triggering an award event if the cash-out is made using a cashless device, the award event awarding the player a prize.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein the award event is triggered if the player cashes-out the updated recorded value on a cashless device.

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24. The method of claim 22 further comprising setting at least one qualifying cash-out value.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein the qualifying cash-out value comprises a fixed amount.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein the qualifying cash-out value is determined by the amount wagered by the player.

5 27. The method of claim 26 further comprising tracking how much a player wagers over a plurality of rounds of game play.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the qualifying cash-out value is based on the amount wagered by the player over a plurality of rounds of game play.

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29. The method of claim 24 further comprising tracking the amount of time the player spends playing the game.

15 30. The method of claim 29 wherein the qualifying cash-out value is based on the amount of time the player spends playing the game.

31. The method of claim 24 wherein the number of qualifying events the player may receive is limited to a certain number for a given time period.

20 32. The method of claim 23 wherein the prize comprises a fixed amount of currency.

33. The method of claim 23 wherein the prize comprises a random amount of currency.

34. The method of claim 23 wherein the prize is correlated to player characteristics.

35. The method of claim 23 wherein the prize comprises a good.

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36. The method of claim 23 wherein the prize comprises a service.

37. The method of claim 23 wherein the prize comprises a chance at receiving a prize.

10 38. The method of claim 37 wherein the prize comprises play on a game of chance.

39. The method of claim 37 wherein the odds of receiving the prize are correlated to another factor.

15 40. The method of claim 39 wherein the factor comprises the value of the prize.

41. The method of claim 23 wherein the prize comprises entry in a gaming competition.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein the gaming competition comprises a tournament.

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43. A system for allowing a gaming player to redeem winnings comprising:

(A) a gaming machine; the gaming machine comprising:

(a) a value acceptor, wherein the value acceptor is configured to accept currency or currency equivalents from a game player;

(b) a processing system, the processing system configured to present the player with a game of chance, the processing system configured to determine whether the player has won or lost the game of chance, the processing system configured to store the amount of value accepted from the game player, the processing system configured to update the value according to whether the player has won or lost the game of chance;

(B) a cashless gaming device, the cashless gaming device configured to store player information;

(C) a cashless gaming device cash-out system, the cash-out system in communication with the gaming machine processing system, the cash-out system comprising:

(a) a processor, the processor configured to compare information from the gaming machine processing system to a set of predefined instructions to determine whether the game player is entitled to a prize; and

(b) a value dispenser, wherein the value dispenser is configured to dispense at least a portion of the value stored in the processing system to the game player.

44. The system of claim 43, the cashless gaming device cash-out system further comprising a prize indicator, the prize indicator indicating to the player any additional prize to which the player may be entitled.

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45. The system of claim 44 wherein the prize indicator comprises a video screen.

46. The system of claim 44 wherein the prize indicator comprises a printed indicator.

10 47. The system of claim 43 wherein the cashless gaming device comprises printed indicia representing the value of the cashless gaming device.

48. The system of claim 43 wherein the cashless gaming device comprises machine readable identification indicia.

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49. An apparatus for awarding a gaming player a reward for redeeming winnings without using a game based coin dispenser, comprising:

- (A) a processor for reading information transferred from a cashless gaming device; the processor comparing the information to a set of pre-set instructions to determine whether an additional prize should be awarded to a player;
- (B) firmware or software containing the pre-set instructions;
- (C) a cashless device reader, the cashless device reader reading information from a cashless device and inputting the information into the processor; and
- (D) player account information storage, the player account storage storing player information, the player account storage in communication with the processor.

50. The apparatus of claim 49 wherein the information comprises a value associated with the cashless device.

15 51. The apparatus of claim 49 wherein the information comprises player tracking information.

52. The apparatus of claim 51 wherein the player tracking information comprises information 20 about the player's wagering history.

53. The apparatus of claim 51 wherein the player tracking information comprises information about the length of time the player has spent wagering on games of chance.

54. The apparatus of claim 49 wherein the information comprises an account identifier.

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55. The apparatus of claim 49, wherein the processor further comprises a random number generator, the random number being used to determine whether the player is entitled to a prize.